**Source: http://www.benchmarkeducation.com/educational-leader/learning-environment/social-studies-content-integration.html#section\_2**

**Social Studies Standards**

The National Council for Social Studies has identified the following strands of study for all students in grades K–8:

* Culture
* Time, Continuity, and Change
* People, Places, and Environments
* Individual Development and Identity
* Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
* Power, Authority, and Governance
* Production, Distribution, and Consumption
* Science, Technology, and Society
* Global Connections
* Civic Ideals and Practices

**Culture**

Culture is all around us. Our cultural backgrounds influence the way we see and interact with the world. Each culture has a unique system of beliefs, knowledge, values, and traditions, yet all have commonalities as well. Because we live in a multicultural society, teachers must help students in the primary years learn to understand and appreciate similarities and differences. By the intermediate and middle school years, students begin to formulate opinions based on their ideas of culture. Social studies instruction provides a forum for students to acquire and assimilate information—including the influence of language and beliefs on day-to-day life.

**Time, Continuity, and Change**

The nature of social studies requires an understanding of the passage of time and the realization that some things change and some things stay the same. In this area of study, students ask:

* *Who am I?*
* *What happened in the past?*
* *How am I connected to the people and events of the past?*
* *How has the world changed?*
* *How does the impact of the past change over time?*
* *How can our present perspectives on our own lives play a part in the larger human story across time?*
* *How do our personal stories reflect varying points of view and inform present ideas and actions?*
* *How might the world change in the future?*

**People, Places, and Environments**

In this strand, students study the relationships between populations and their environments:

* *Where are cities, businesses, industrial operations, courthouses, grocery stores, etc. located?*
* *Why are they located where they are?*
* *What patterns are reflected in the groupings of things?*
* *What is a region?*
* *How do landforms change?*
* *What effects do these changes have on the people in the area?*

**Individual Development and Identity**

Since society influences the individual development and identity of its members, students must learn to recognize and understand cultural norms. Questions central to this study include:

* *How do people learn?*
* *Why do people behave as they do?*
* *What influences how people learn, perceive, and grow?*
* *How do people meet their basic needs in a variety of contexts—farm, city*, *town, or village?*

**Individuals, Groups, and Institutions**

Institutions—family structures, schools, churches, government agencies, and legal systems—form early in the development of a culture. Each institution guides daily life and reflects the values and beliefs of the culture. Students might ask:

* *What are the roles of institutions in this and other societies?*
* *How am I influenced by institutions?*
* *How do institutions change?*
* *What is my role in changing institutions?*

**Power, Authority, and Governance**

Since differing forms of power, authority, and government exist in every culture, students must study these systems in order to better understand the behaviors and patterns of citizens. Issues students might address are:

* *What is power?*
* *What forms does it take?*
* *How is power gained, used, and justified?*
* *What is legitimate authority?*
* *How are governments structured?*
* *What is the difference between a right and a privilege?*
* *What are the responsibilities of those in power?*
* *What are the responsibilities of all citizens?*
* *How do groups and nations seek to establish order and security?*
* *How do groups and nations attempt to resolve conflicts?*

**Production, Distribution, and Consumption**

People often want more goods or services than they find available. Solutions are attempted at the local, state, national, and global levels. Issues related to production, distribution, consumption, jobs, and economic prosperity include:

* *What will be produced?*
* *How will production be organized?*
* *How will goods and services be distributed?*
* *What is the most effective allocation of land, labor, capital, and management?*

**Science, Technology, and Society**

Discoveries, inventions, and innovations date back to the beginning of time and bring both positive and negative changes. Questions fundamental to the study of science and technology and their effects on society include:

* *How have technological advances in the past brought major societal change?*
* *Is new technology always better?*
* *How can we cope with the pace of change?*
* *Have technological advances peaked?*
* *How can individuals and groups maintain distinct identities, while technology links us all together?*

**Global Connections**

The world is growing smaller due to advances in transportation and communication. Economies, governments, and businesses all experience large-scale interdependence. To address global connections, students study economic needs and competition, political and military alliances, and the importance of recognizing ethnic differences.

**Civic Ideals and Practices**

All societies have civic ideals and expected practices. Questions central to these issues are:

* *What is civic involvement?*
* *How can I become an active member of society?*
* *What does citizenship mean now as compared to what it meant fifty years ago?*
* *What is the balance between rights and responsibilities?*
* *What is the role of a citizen in a community, city, state, nation, and world?*

**Each strand provides rich opportunities for reading and writing connections. In addition, strong strategy instruction helps students understand the important role of social studies in daily life.**